

Noise at Work

Department / Service:	Operations	
Originator:	Paul Graham	Health & Safety Manager
Accountable Director:	Chief Operating Officer	
Approved by:	Trust Leadership Group (TLG)	
Date of Approval:	16 th June 2017	
Review Date:	27 th February 2020	
This is the most current document and should be used until a revised version is in place		
Target Organisation(s)	Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	
Target Departments	All	
Target staff categories	Various	

Purpose of this document:

The statutory requirements for safely managing noise at work are detailed in the ***Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005***. The regulations do not apply to members of the public exposed to noise from their non-work activities or to low level noise which is a nuisance but causes no risk of hearing damage. The Trust will wherever reasonably practicable reduce the risk of exposure to noise at work. It will undertake any necessary risk assessments and where reasonably practicable introduce noise reduction measures. This policy sets out the requirements for managing noise risks.

Key amendments to this Document:

Date	Amendment	By:
04/12	Biennial review with only minor changes to layout	PG
04/14	Biennial review with only minor changes	PG
Aug 16	Document extended for 12 months as per TMC paper approved on 22 nd July 2015	TMC
June 17	Policy review with only minor changes	PG
Feb 2019	Document extended for 12 months due to no legislative changes	Paul Graham

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1. Introduction

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust will do all that is reasonably practicable to prevent or reduce the risks to health and safety from exposure to noise at work. Where the Trust cannot suitably reduce the level of noise it will provide suitable hearing protection and ensure that employees are provided with adequate information, instruction and training.

2. Scope of the Policy

This Policy covers all employees and any contractors whilst working on site.

3. Definitions

To determine whether we have a noise problem at work the Trust will need to measure the **level of noise** and the how long individuals are exposed.

Noise is measured in decibels (dB) and can cause hearing loss which can be temporary or permanent. The Regulations require the Trust to take specific actions at certain action values. These values relate to the levels of exposure to noise of staff averaged over a working day or week and the maximum noise (peak sound pressure) to which staff are exposed in a working day.

The following exposure values will apply:

	Lower exposure action value (dB)	Upper exposure action value (dB)	Exposure limit values
Daily or weekly personal dose exposure (LEP,d or LEP,w)	80	85	87
Peak sound pressure (LC _{peak})	135	137	140

4 Responsibility and Duties

The Chief Operating has overall responsibility for health and safety. He/she will delegate certain tasks to responsible managers.

4.1 Managers Duties

- Managers responsible for work areas exposed to noise at work must ensure that: Risk assessments are used to determine what is needed to ensure the health and safety of employees who are exposed to noise;
- Workers are consulted and allowed to participate in the assessment process;
- Risks are eliminated or reduced using good practice and known control and management solutions;
- For higher-risk cases, you plan and put in place technical and organisational noise-control measures;

- The legal limits on noise exposure are not exceeded;
- Where appropriate employees are protected with hearing protection making it mandatory for high-risk cases;
- Employees make use of hearing protection with zones, instruction and supervision;
- All noise control equipment is fully and properly used;
- All noise control equipment is maintained;
- Health surveillance i.e. hearing checks are provided for those at risk and the results used to review controls and further protect individuals.
- Employees are given information, instruction and training about the risks, control measures, hearing protection and safe working practices

4.2 Employees Duties

Staff must ensure that:

- They properly use any equipment provided for working with noise.
- They follow any training and instructions.
- An Incident Report Form is completed and their manager informed of any safety hazards associated with noise at work.

5. Policy detail

5.1 Risk Assessment

The key to preventing injury from noise at work is to carry out a risk assessment as per the Trust's Risk Assessment Policy. This risk assessment should:

- Identify where there a risk from noise and who is likely to be affected?
- Contain a reliable estimate of your employees' exposures, and compare the exposure with the exposure action values and action limits above.
- Identify what you need to do to comply with the law for example whether noise control measures or hearing protection are needed, and, if so, where and what type; and
- Identify any employees who need to be provided with health surveillance and whether any are at particular risk. (Refer to Occupational Health Department for guidance)

It is essential that the estimate of any employees' exposure is representative of the work that they carry out. It will need to take account of:

- The work they do or are likely to do;
- The ways in which they do the work; and
- How it might vary from one day to the next

Note: All noise measurements must be carried out by a competent person – contact the Estates Department for advice.

5.2 Risk Control

When selecting noise reduction measures the following factors need to be considered:

- Can we use different, quieter process or quieter equipment;
- Can we introduce a low-noise purchasing policy for machinery and equipment;

- Can we modify the paths by which the noise travels through the air to the people exposed;
- Can we design and lay out the workplace for low noise emission; and
- Can we limit the time spent in noisy areas – every halving of the time spent in a noisy area will reduce noise exposure by 3dB.

Note: The Health and Safety Manager can provide advice on the provision and use of hearing protection.

4. Implementation

4.1 Plan for implementation

This policy will be communicated to all staff-side safety representatives and Trust managers and made available to all staff via the Trust's intranet site.

4.2 Dissemination

This Policy will be made available on the H&S page of the Trust Intranet site. A Managers Brief will be distributed to all managers for them to in turn inform their staff of the relevant sections of the policy. It will also be communicated to managers and staff-side representatives via the Trust Health and Safety Committee

4.3 Training and awareness

Staff will be informed on this policy during Corporate and local induction training and during their mandatory risk management update training.

5. Monitoring and compliance

The H&S Manager will monitor the effectiveness of this policy, as a standard, and the general level of compliance with its requirements.

6. Policy Review

The Trust Health and Safety Committee will review this policy every two years or upon any significant change to working practice or relevant legislation.

7. References

References:

Code:

Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974	
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999	
Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005	
INDG362 (Rev 2 – 11/12) Noise at work – Guidance form employers on the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.	
Health and Safety Strategy	
Health and Safety Policy	
Risk Assessment Policy	

8. Background

8.1 Equality requirements

There are no equality issues associated with this policy.

8.2 Financial risk assessment

There are no financial implications associated with this policy in terms of complying with the Regulations.

8.3 Consultation

. The following were consulted in the production of this version of the policy:

- Policy Working Group
- Members of the Health and Safety Committee

8.4 Approval process

This policy will obtain final approval from the Trust Leadership Group.

Supporting Document 1 - Equality Impact Assessment Tool

To be completed by the key document author and attached to key document when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

	Title of document	Yes/No	Comments
1.	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:		
	• Race	No	
	• Ethnic origins (including gypsies and travellers)	No	
	• Nationality	No	
	• Gender	No	
	• Culture	No	
	• Religion or belief	No	
	• Sexual orientation including lesbian, gay and bisexual people	No	
	• Age	No	
	• Disability	No	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	
3.	If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	N/A	
4.	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	No	
5.	If so can the impact be avoided?	N/A	
6.	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	N/A	
7.	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	N/A	

If you have identified a potential discriminatory impact of this key document, please refer it to Assistant Manager of Human Resources, together with any suggestions as to the action required to avoid/reduce this impact.

For advice in respect of answering the above questions, please contact Assistant Manager of Human Resources.

Supporting Document 2 - Financial Risk Assessment

To be completed by the key document author and attached to key document when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

	Title of document:	Yes/No
1.	Does the implementation of this document require any additional Capital resources	No
2.	Does the implementation of this document require additional revenue	No
3.	Does the implementation of this document require additional manpower	NO
4.	Does the implementation of this document release any manpower costs through a change in practice	NO
5.	Are there additional staff training costs associated with implementing this document which cannot be delivered through current training programmes or allocated training times for staff	No

If the response to any of the above is yes, please complete a business case and which is signed by your Finance Manager and Directorate Manager for consideration by the Accountable Director before progressing to the relevant committee for approval